GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1620
ANSWERED ON:10.12.2008
ATMOSPHERIC BROWN CLOUD
Singh Baba Shri K.C.

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Atmospheric Brown Cloud (ABC) reduces the chances of monsoon rains substantially in the subcontinent thereby causing potential threat to the agricultural harvests;

(b) if so, the measures taken/proposed to be taken by Government to tackle this threat;

(c) whether any study has been undertaken to assess its impact on the environment of the country; and

(d) if so, the outcome thereof?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS(SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA)

(a-d) The Atmospheric Brown Clouds(ABC) are air pollutants such as black carbon and other organic gases and acids.The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) in its Regional Assessment Report on Atmospheric Brown Clouds with Focus on Asia published in 2008 has reported that ABC induced-dimming is considered as one of the concerns for its impact on rainfall in India and agricultural harvests.Various institutions under the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) and Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) and other research organizations participated in the study of the impacts of ABC on agriculture,health and other environmental parameters.However,no conclusive scientific evidence of its impact has yet been established.The various measures taken by the Government inter-alia include:

(i) Notification of emission standards for various categories of industry notified under the Environment (Protection) Rules, 1986;

(ii) Cleaner fuels introduced for control of vehicular pollution as per Auto Fuel Policy;

(iii) Use of beneficiated coal for coal based thermal power plants;

(iv) Implementation of stringent emission norms for Diesel Generator Sets;

(v) Monitoring of air polluting industries for compliance of the emission norms.